

**Amendments to the Claims:**

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Currently Amended) A thin-film magnetic head comprising:
  - a magnetoresistive film;
  - a pair of magnetic domain control layers, disposed separately from each other on both sides of the magnetoresistive film in a track width direction, for applying a bias magnetic field to the magnetoresistive film;
  - a pair of electrode layers, laminated on the respective magnetic domain control layers while being separated from each other on both sides of the magnetoresistive film in the track width direction, for supplying a current to the magnetoresistive film;
  - first and second shield layers, disposed separately from each other in a laminating direction so as to hold the magnetic domain control layers and electrode layers therebetween, for shielding the magnetoresistive film;
  - a first insulating layer disposed between the magnetoresistive film and a magnetic domain control layer of the pair of magnetic domain control layers and the first shield layer; and
  - a second insulating layer disposed between the magnetoresistive film and an electrode layer of the pair of electrode layers and the second shield layer;
  - wherein the shield layers have a distance therebetween shorter at a position where the electrode layer and the magnetic domain control layer are laminated than that at a position where the magnetoresistive film is located; and wherein, while a surface of the magnetic domain control layer on the first insulating layer side at the position where the electrode ~~film~~ layer and the magnetic domain control layer are laminated is taken as a reference surface, a distance from the reference surface to a surface of the electrode layer on

the second insulating layer side is set shorter than the distance from the reference surface to a surface of the magnetoresistive film on the second insulating layer side.

2. (Original) A thin-film magnetic head according to claim 1, further comprising an additional electrode layer separated from an end part of the magnetoresistive film in the track width direction by at least a predetermined length in the track width direction and electrically connected to the former electrode layer.

3. (Original) A thin-film magnetic head according to claim 2, wherein the additional electrode layer has a thickness set greater than that of the former electrode layer.

4. (Original) A thin-film magnetic head according to claim 2, further comprising an additional magnetic domain control layer separated from an end part of the magnetoresistive film in the track width direction by at least a predetermined length in the track width direction and laminated on the former magnetic domain control layer.

5. (Original) A thin-film magnetic head according to claim 1, wherein the distance from the reference surface to the surface of the electrode layer on the second insulating layer side is set shorter than the distance from the reference surface to the surface of the magnetoresistive film on the second insulating layer side within an area separated by 50 nm to 200 nm from an end part of the surface of the magnetoresistive film on the second insulating layer side in the track width direction.

6. (Currently Amended) A thin-film magnetic head assembly comprising a thin-film magnetic head, and a flexible member for attaching the thin-film magnetic head thereto;  
the thin-film magnetic head comprising:  
a magnetoresistive film;  
a pair of magnetic domain control layers, disposed separately from each other on both sides of the magnetoresistive film in a track width direction, for applying a bias magnetic field to the magnetoresistive film;

a pair of electrode layers, laminated on the respective magnetic domain control layers while being separated from each other on both sides of the magnetoresistive film in the track width direction, for supplying a current to the magnetoresistive film;

first and second shield layers, disposed separately from each other in a laminating direction so as to hold the magnetic domain control layers and electrode layers therebetween, for shielding the magnetoresistive film;

a first insulating layer disposed between the magnetoresistive film and a magnetic domain control layer of the pair of magnetic domain control layers and the first shield layer; and

a second insulating layer disposed between the magnetoresistive film and an electrode layer of the pair of electrode layers and the second shield layer;

wherein the shield layers have a distance therebetween shorter at a position where the electrode layer and the magnetic domain control layer are laminated than that at a position where the magnetoresistive film is located; and wherein, while a surface of the magnetic domain control layer on the first insulating layer side at the position where the electrode ~~film~~ layer and the magnetic domain control layer are laminated is taken as a reference surface, a distance from the reference surface to a surface of the electrode layer on the second insulating layer side is set shorter than the distance from the reference surface to a surface of the magnetoresistive film on the second insulating layer side.

7. (Currently Amended) A storage device comprising a magnetic recording medium for magnetically recording a signal, and a thin-film magnetic head for converting a change in a magnetic field leaking from the magnetic recording medium into an electric signal;

the thin-film magnetic head comprising:

a magnetoresistive film;

a pair of magnetic domain control layers, disposed separately from each other on both sides of the magnetoresistive film in a track width direction, for applying a bias magnetic field to the magnetoresistive film;

a pair of electrode layers, laminated on the respective magnetic domain control layers while being separated from each other on both sides of the magnetoresistive film in the track width direction, for supplying a current to the magnetoresistive film;

first and second shield layers, disposed separately from each other in a laminating direction so as to hold the magnetic domain control layers and electrode layers therebetween, for shielding the magnetoresistive film;

a first insulating layer disposed between the magnetoresistive film and a magnetic domain control layer of the pair of magnetic domain control layers and the first shield layer; and

a second insulating layer disposed between the magnetoresistive film and an electrode layer of the pair of electrode layers and the second shield layer;

wherein the shield layers have a distance therebetween shorter at a position where the electrode layer and the magnetic domain control layer are laminated than that at a position where the magnetoresistive film is located; and wherein, while a surface of the magnetic domain control layer on the first insulating layer side at the position where the electrode ~~film~~ layer and the magnetic domain control layer are laminated is taken as a reference surface, a distance from the reference surface to a surface of the electrode layer on the second insulating layer side is set shorter than the distance from the reference surface to a surface of the magnetoresistive film on the second insulating layer side.

8-10. (Canceled)